May 19, 2011  
12:15 p.m.  
6th period  
Mrs. C's classroom

The new class comes in loudly and finds their seats.  The manager of group one says I have mini scissors and shows them to me.  Sweet girl says, "I want the iPad," and smiles.  Sweet girl says that there is a problem with their video.  The teacher says, “I don't understand what you are saying.  If the video is not on your desktop then why didn't it work?”  She tells them that they have to show their video separately when it is time in the presentation ppt.  They say they are just going to read it.  
  
The first thing we need to do is talk about Virtual performance assessment.  It takes 90 minutes and Mrs. S says that she will take her 90 minute to do it.  She says it is like a video game.  A few kids say yeah.  T explains the VPA.  She says Harvard University is studying kids to show what you know by playing games.  You guys are into the gaming thing.  She says that if you are chosen you will go to the High School and take the VPA.  She talks about it not being for a grade.  She shows the letter and shows the permission form.  25 kids can do it, first come, first serve.  She explains when the sessions are.  She explains when she wants permission slips back and says if they don't have enough they will have to drop out of the study.  T says her personal feeling is… “It is the end of the year and I can sit in class and do math nor in can go to the High School and do something fun.  Even though is it science it is still something fun.”  She shows and example. The screen shows a virtual reality screen with avatars that talk about saving kelp.  She says now we are underwater at the end of the bay...she explains how together information and put it in a notebook.  All of this is designed to see how kids think about science.  Harvard is going to look at how many kids did this, how many kids made the wrong choice.  She yes that they are not going to be looking at well Shelby, she didn't do the right thing...the class laughs.  That Shelby she didn't come up with the right answer.  
  
She talks about going to the conference and that a man from Washington had another study that they couldn't do the study because it didn't match curriculum.  She talks about before they get into high school they might be playing video games in school because this is a big idea.  That this man has many games that she plans to use and send to 8th grade teacher of science.  
  
She explains how it will work if they sign up.  
  
Aa asks if he can do it outside of school.  T says no that they had to sign up with classes.  I wonder if getting a parent to sign is hard for him.  T tells students where to turn in slips after a student asks that question.  
  
  
Yesterday I asked you as groups to evaluate yourself and evaluate yourself group in the rubric.  She didn't get them all back.  They will need to do that today.  T says she wants to start with Powerpoint because they have the chart.  Shelby is your group ready.  She says yes and gets out of her chair.  T says to log on to your laptops.  The group says out backpack is gone.  They find it.  Out stuff is in their backpack.  The group all goes and gathered around the projector cart.  Group 1 talks about their presentation and the nirvana says, you are gonna read it?  He says he will read something.  They are holding papers and trying to manage who will read what.  Group 1 orange boy says, “I got no pictures.”  The intervention specialist gets a rubric from group 2.  She hands it to the teacher and says she is gonna go get a water from her room in a bit.  T says okay.  She gets another rubric and says here is another one. The teacher gives it back to a girl and tells her how to score it correctly.  
  
T asks Shelby for her rubric.  She says she didn't understand what to do yesterday. T explains.  There is a time period that is waiting.  The T says Shelby do you need help?  She says, “No it is loading. It is just taking a long time.” She asks if she can unplug this for a second so that I can get to the slide show.  The teacher comes up to the cart and reprimands a boy group member and tells him if he can't behave he can sit done.    
  
Green dye girl is leaning over her books resting, but her girl group mate is working on the computer next to her.  She appears to be looking at the screen and they exchange words although I can’t hear what they are.  She lies her head down.    
  
Brooke is your group ready?  She says yes.  This is taking a long time to load, let’s start with you.  Group 3 sits down. And group 2 comes up.  She tells them not to all be in the middle and to stand next to the screen in the front of the room.  Shelby asks if she can turn off all of the lights.  T says why.  She says so we can see better.  T says they are fine;   
  
Manager Girl of group 5 is in the middle next to the Powerpoint maneuvering the slides.  Two boys concourse and green dye girl stand by the screen.  Shorter boy begins to read the screen.  The project is about recycling the Styrofoam trays in the cafeteria.  The trays would need to be compacted and the compactor is too expensive.  More Eco friendly trays would be good but they are too expensive.  He says they should send the trays to Miami University.  
  
They show a picture of a dead bird.  
  
Green dye girl reads the next slide which talks about pollution in the pond water.  She reads two more slides.  She explains that trash long ago was plastic and could be dishwashed.  Manager girl comes reads the slide.  All of the students are watching the slide except for all of the students who are in front of computers and maneuvering computers.  Intervention specialist tells group 1 and 2 that they need to be done with it.  
  
Converse boys begins to read the slide but it goes off and a page that says system opens not sent and your system configuration has changed since you last boot.  
  
He talks about interviewing two staff members about why plastic trays aren't used because of time, water and labor.  With the economy the way it is they cannot afford it.  He says they can get volunteers, but the staff member says not enough volunteers.  He says that it costs over 10000 to recycling them.  He says that Miami University is there best option.   Converse stops talking and the class claps.    
  
T asks if Shelby’s group is ready but she says it is still loading.  She asks if group 1 is easy.  They say yes and come up to the cart.  T goes to look at group 3’s Computer.  They discuss how to solve the problem.  I don't have the...the t says.  She is distracted by the other group's needs.    
  
Guys you will have to be really quiet because they have an interview and there should be speakers on there can't but I can't find them.  A boy from group 3 says they are right here.  T says oh good, well plug it in.  He plugs it in.  You still need to be Wally really quiet so that if it doesn't work.  The interview starts and it is really loud.  T says oh and rolls her eyes.    
  
The interview is with the principal about recycling produce.  The intervention specialist and T sit and stand in the back of the room and watch intently as the principal talks.    The intervention specialist smiles.  The T puts her hand over her mouth leaning on it and smiles.  She goes to the group 3 to answer a question.  
  
Group 1 is at the front of the room.  Sweet girl makes marks on a paper.  T sits at her desk.  The principal talks about if she would put a compost pile at the school and that she would need to have her concerns discussed.  The girl asks orange boy if he has any questions and he says no I'm good.  Manager is asking the questions.  T says that she needs a proposal and manager says they will get one.  Interview ends.  T says ok you also have a PowerPoint. They say no that it messed up and they are just going to read.  Orange boy starts taking.  T interrupts and says guys you need to be quiet.  Orange boy you need to start again and speak up.  Orange reads very slowly and crinkled his eyes to look at the paper.  He reads in monotone.  He reads all about how to make a compost.  He has trouble with the word metatora and manger helps him.  She looks over his shoulder and eyes the paper silently with him.  Sweet girl and nirvana write occasionally on their papers as he reads. Sweet girl starts to read.  She is quiet and the noise from then other room is louder than her voice.  She reads very quickly and is hard to understand.  Two boys from group 2 play with the desk and a pen and whisper to each other.  One boy moves in his seat.  Sweet girl smiles as she reads but does not look up.  Manager starts to read about what can be in the compost pile.  She is and clearer and appears confident as she looks at the class before she begins.  She gets slower and less loud when she comes to hard words.  She then paraphrases at the end from her head and looks at the room.  She uses her hand to talk.  She then says that's all, I don't know.  She smiles and steps back. Nirvana begins to talk about what to put in the compost.  He is loud and clear, he laughs a bit when he reads certain words.  He reads straight fron the paper and does not look up.  Sweet girl reads over his shoulder and so does manager occasionally.  As he is successful at pronouncining words, the girls back off.  
  
At this point only 4 students are looking at the group.  One being green dye girl but her head is down.  The class appears to be losing interest.  Some students are wiring, playing with their hair, the computers.  
  
The presentation ends and the class claps unexcitedly.  T says it is time to go and that she needs their rubrics.  She come to group 3 and tells them to get their stuff ready early next time.  There are pictures popping up on their screen.  She says you are in my LA class, aren't you.  Leave this open and we will work on getting then pictures embedded into the file.  I learned something about that yesterday that I didn't know before, so whaooo.  Shelby says okay. T says be careful about then power cord for the cart.  She makes the class move separately so that she can dismiss them.  A boy hits the cord and the power goes out.  The teacher sighs and says Joe in an annoyed way.    
  
Observation ends.  
  
Observer Notes  
  
  
As I waited for the class to arrive a girl in the hall went by and said "you have an iPad.  Man, you're rich."  
  
The teacher came in and told me that she was having trouble with picture because the district didn't have enough money to buy Microsoft office for the district so they used open office and that made it so picture that are in the PowerPoint don't stay in.

Nathan was the boy that I interviewed. His knowledge of the project’s content was far above what was actually displayed in the presentation.